

COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

SUBJECT Construction Activity at Rostock and Warnemünde

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1. Large railway transports of forced laborers pass daily through the Rostock station on their way to the new prison camps at Buchholz.

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Comment: It is not known which of the several localities by the name of Buchholz in Mecklenburg is the site of these camps.)

743.43 4M/c Most of the prisoners are Germans, but Poles, Lithuanians, and, since early April, Romanians are also included in these transports. The rail shipments are supervised by German police and MVD personnel, while the camps at Buchholz are guarded by Russian soldiers--probably military police.

2. Large numbers of barracks are being constructed in the labor camps, but most prisoners live in tents. New arrivals in March and April had no shelter whatsoever, and were forced for two to three weeks to sleep on the ground. No reliable estimates of the number of prisoners at Buchholz have been arrived at, but, from the daily arrival of 1,500 to 2,000 men during March and April, it may be concluded that the camps contained approximately 80,000 workers by the middle of April 1948.

3. It is rumored that these forced laborers will be employed in the building of a canal for the linking of Rostock-Warnemünde with the industrial areas of Central Germany. It is also possible, however, that this large labor force will be exclusively engaged in construction work in the harbors of Rostock and Warnemünde. There is much activity, for instance, on the premises of the former Neptun-Werft, which have tripled in size since the end of the war and upon which a number of new slipways are being erected. Three thousand new workers, principally metal craftsmen from the former Sauckel-Werke in Thuringia, were added to the labor force of the Neptun-Werft on 1 April 1948. The section of the yard which is engaged on Soviet orders has been carefully fenced off and employs 4,000 workers. Sixteen to twenty 1,200-ton coastal steamers were on the ways on 12 April 1948. It is possible that four of these vessels are not part of the Baltic construction program, but are, rather, to be used as ferries in Kronstadt harbor.

4. The rumors which hint that submarines are being built in the restricted portions of the yards are probably false, since there are no facilities

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-2-

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in Rostock for the casting and forging of the various specialized parts which are involved in the construction of underwater craft. The arrival of prefabricated submarine parts from elsewhere in the Zone would not, by reason of their size and peculiar shape, escape detection. It is more likely that submarines and minesweepers are being built in the restricted sections of the shipyards.

5. Considerable construction work is underway in the Marinewerft Jagdhafen. Underground bunkers--probably former German submarine pens--have been strengthened and enlarged. Subterranean gasoline reservoirs and pumping stations are also ready for use. In addition, a pipeline is being extended to Heiligendamm (O-62), where a Russian seaplane base is in the process of construction. Precise information on this base is unobtainable, since all points within twenty kilometers of Heiligendamm are within a closely-guarded restricted area.

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